airline like weather, airport congestion, ATC delays. The delays include consequential delays, which are as a result of primary delay at the originating station having a cascading effect at other en-route stations.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) The following measures have been implemented by Air India to bring about improvement in on-time performance: (i) Prune and consolidate flights, with a view to sustaining undisrupted and punctual operations; (ii) Continuous review of aircraft routing, delays, crew allocations etc. by senior executives with a view to achieving optimum utilisation of crew and substantial savings; (iii) a new base for crew was opened in thiruvananthapuram; (iv) Enhance aircraft maintenance reserve; (v) A corporate level Control Room has been set up at Delhi headed by an Executive Director which will ultimately be integrated with the Hub Control set-up in Mumbai. The control Room at Delhi, Hub Control at Mumbai and Regional Coordination Cell have a dedicated officer in each shift to regularly communicate with the Call Centre through Hot lines to keep them apprised of the flight status continuously; (vi) A mini Control Cell is being set up at Thiruvananthapuram to monitor flight operations; (vii) a Punctuality Coordination Cell has been functioning at Mumbai on round-the-clock to coordinate various flight handling departments and ensure punctuality of flights.

Lending of IAF pilots

2958. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the airlines are facing shortage of trained pilots;

(b) if so, the extent of this shortage;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Air Force (IAF) has been asked to lend its pilots to the airlines;

(d) if so, under what conditions the services of Indian air force's pilots can be used for civil airlines; and

(e) whether IAF pilots can be hired by the private airlines too?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Civil Aviation industry in the country is facing a shortage of approximately 1000 type rated pilots.

(c) Yes, Sir. 12 Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots have been inducted in Air India.

(d) The induction is on the basis of their flying experience in Air Force and subsequently passing examination conducted by Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for civil licence followed by Air India's training for P-2 endorsement on type of their aircraft.

(e) So far no proposal has been received from private airline for induction of IAF pilots.

New airport of Noida

2959. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1099 given in the Rajya Sabha on 11th March, 2008 and state:

(a) whether Government has given in principle approval for construction of the Greater NOIDA airport last year;

(b) if so, the total cost likely to be incurred for construction of the airport; and

(c) the steps taken to construct the proposed airport at Greater Noida?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Tourist flights

2960. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India is operating tourist flights connecting different places of tourism in a particular zone of the country;

(b) if so, the names of the places connected in a particular zone;

(c) whether any such programme is contemplated for the North-Eastern region; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) National Aviation Company of India Limited currently connects 60 cities which includes tourist stations like Aurangabad, Bagdogra, Bangalore, Coimbatore, Goa, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Leh, Jaipur, Jammu, Khajuraho, Kullu, Madurai, Port Blair, Shillong, Srinagar, Tirupati, Udaipur and Varanasi etc. covering the length and breadth of the country with direct air service, linking 146 city pairs, including 11 cities within the North-Eastern Region.

Tests of male cabin crew members

2961. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 92 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 4th March, 2008 and state:

(a) whether male cabin crew members are also put through similar tests;

(b) whether all cabin crew members have equal standards of testing; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) In erstwhile Air India, therer is no medical test for male cabin crew because the retirement age of male cabin crew has always been 58 years. Medical check was not part of the terms and conditions of employment of male cabin crew. On the other hand, the retirement age of female cabin crew, which was originally 30 years, has been extended from time to time and finally has been brought at par with the male cabin crew (58 years). However, the extension of retirement age for female cabin crew was implemented, subject to medical check. Both male and female cabin crew, however, undergo annual weight checks.

In erstwhile Indian Airlines, as per their Service Regulations, the cabin crew, both male and female, is subjected to medical examination once a year after attaining the age of 35 years.